



MEMORANDUM

TO: INTERESTED PARTIES

FROM: GLEN BOLGER/JIM HOBART

RE: KEY FINDINGS – SURVEY OF REPUBLICANS AND INDEPENDENTS IN MINNESOTA'S 1ST, 2ND, AND 3RD CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICTS

DATE: MARCH 26, 2018

Methodology

Public Opinion Strategies conducted a telephone survey of Republican and Independent likely voters in Minnesota's 1st, 2nd, and 3rd congressional districts. The survey was completed with 500 likely voters, with interviews equally distributed across the three congressional districts. Forty-percent (40%) of interviews were conducted with cell-phone respondents. The survey was completed, March 21-24, 2018, and has a margin of error of $\pm 4.38\%$ in 95 out of 100 cases.

Key Findings

1. ***Republicans and Independents in these three key Congressional districts strongly support Minnesota pursuing an all-of-the-above energy strategy.***

Voters were read the following statement:

Minnesota should pursue an all-of-the-above energy strategy, which means lowering our heavy dependence on fossil fuels over time and allowing an increase in electricity generation from renewable energy sources as well as more energy efficiency, and I support taking action to accelerate the development and use of clean energy in Minnesota.

Fully 73% of Republican and Independent voters agree that Minnesota should pursue an all-of-the-above energy strategy, with 34% saying they strongly agree. Just 25% disagree with this statement.

Support for an all of the above energy is consistent with men (71% agree) women (74% agree), and is especially strong with voters age 18-34 (91% agree).

2. ***These voters also view net metering policies and permitting third-party sales of electricity as very important.***

Respondents were read several policies that will help expand Minnesota’s support for clean energy, and they recognized the importance of both net metering policies and permitting third-party electricity sales.

	% Very Important	% Total Important
Permit third-party sales of electricity from outside the monopoly utility so that customers can have more choice to shop for the lowest-cost option.	46%	84%
Net metering policies that enable more homeowners and farmers to invest in their own renewable energy by compensating them for the extra energy they produce, which is used by other customers.	42%	83%

3. ***There is widespread agreement that clean energy growth should be accelerated to allow innovation and entrepreneurship to drive economic growth and job creation.***

Seventy-eight percent (78%) of these GOP and Independent voters agree that the growth of clean energy will allow American innovation and entrepreneurs to drive economic growth and job creation. More than one-third (39%) strongly agree with this statement.

4. ***Voters also agree that the state should give businesses and consumers more choices in the energy market.***

Respondents were read the following statement:

Minnesota should give businesses and consumers more choices about how to transition away from burning fossil fuels in order to drive innovation and competitive pricing.

A clear majority (77%) agreed with this statement, including 35% who strongly agreed that businesses and consumers should be given more energy choices.

5. ***There is a clear preference for a new energy system that will give Minnesota consumers more choices.***

Voters were asked to choose between two options:

Now, I would like to read you two options for purchasing electricity, and please tell me which one you prefer.

The current system, in which nearly everyone purchases their electricity from one government-regulated monopoly utility

...or...

A new system that allows people to have a choice of where they purchase electricity and what kind of electricity, such as clean energy.

More than three-quarters (77%) of Republican and Independent voters said they would prefer a new system, compared to 20% who were satisfied with the current system.

Base Republicans (76% new system), soft Republicans (78% new system), and Independents (77% new system), all clearly come down on the side of a new system that would give consumers more choice.

The Bottom Line

Minnesota Republicans and Independents in three key congressional districts are very supportive of an all-of-the-above energy strategy, as well as more specific clean energy policies such as net-metering.

These voters also decidedly back changes to the state's energy market that would increase consumer choice, drive innovation, and make using clean energy sources more of a viable option.